

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 8-20 are pending in the above-identified application, and were rejected. Accordingly, claims 1-6 and 8-20 are at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 1-6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Fushie et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,339,197) in view of *Yamazaki et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,834,327). Applicants respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 9-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Fushie et al.* (US 6,339,197) in view of *Yamazaki et al.* (US 5,834,327), *Stevens et al.* (US 6,392,356) and further in view of *Nakazawa et al.* (US 6,411,349). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Both rejections rely on *Fushie* with an earliest effective filing date of May 26, 2000. However, the instant application claims priority to the Japanese Patent Application No. P11-271950, filed on September 27, 1999. Applicant submitted a certified English language translation of the Japanese priority application on June 9, 2003, perfecting their claim of priority. *Fushie* should never have been cited against the claims. Accordingly, Applicant submits that *Fushie* does not qualify as a prior art reference, and respectfully request the withdrawal of these rejections.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-6 and 8-20 are patentable over the cited art and that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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